



Sonoma Water

Clean. Reliable. Essential. Every Day.

Reservoir Operations Workgroup

Public Policy Facilitating Committee

January 21, 2026

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Biological Opinion Adaptive Management of Reservoir Releases to Support Salmonid Migration

- **Lake Mendocino Pulse Release**

- Increase in minimum instream flows in **Upper Russian River** to support passage of salmonids
- Can occur only during **Dry** water supply conditions
- **Fall:** October – December
- **Winter/ Spring:** Feb 15 – June 1
- Can occur one time for up to **14 days**



- **Lake Sonoma Blockwater Release**

- Up to 2,500 ac-ft total release volume
- Can occur any time regardless of water supply condition



RR Reservoir Operations Workgroup (RRROW)

- ❖ **Led by Sonoma Water**

- ❖ **Multiple Agencies:**

National Marine Fisheries Service

US Army Corps of Engineers

CA Dept of Fish & Wildlife

State Water Board

Regional Water Quality Control Board

RR Flood Control District

- ❖ **Provide guidance on the implementation of blockwater and pulse flow releases**

- ❖ **Sonoma Water provides weekly projections of Russian River Conditions**

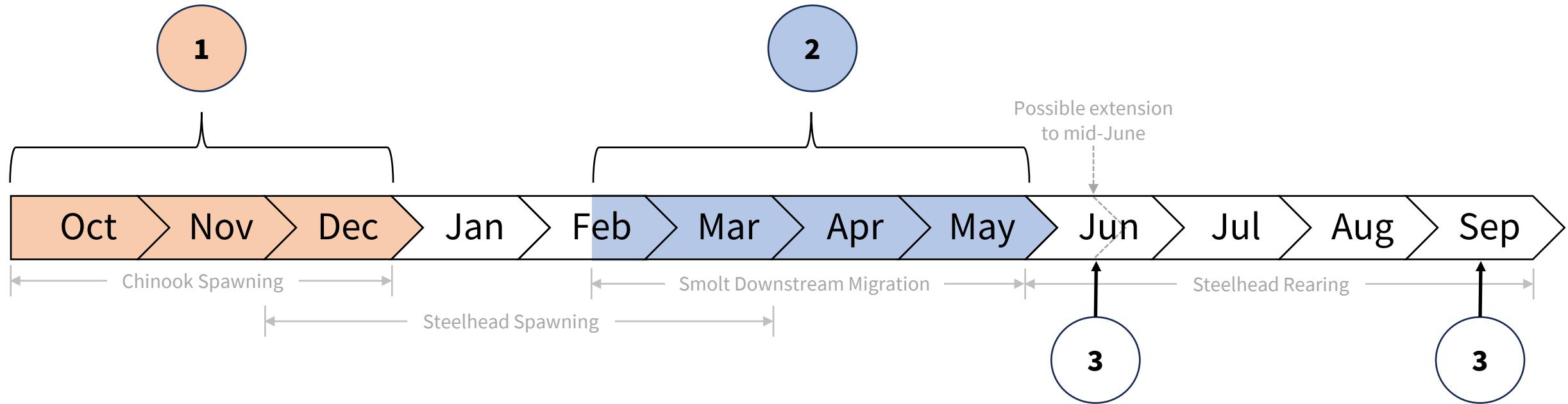
- ❖ **Co-develop Reservoir Operations Plan**

- ❖ **Conducted 2 meetings to date:**

- Sept 20, 2025: Kickoff Meeting
- Dec 15, 2025: Implementation Discussion



Lake Mendocino Pulse Releases



1

Upstream Migration: Oct – Dec management period

2

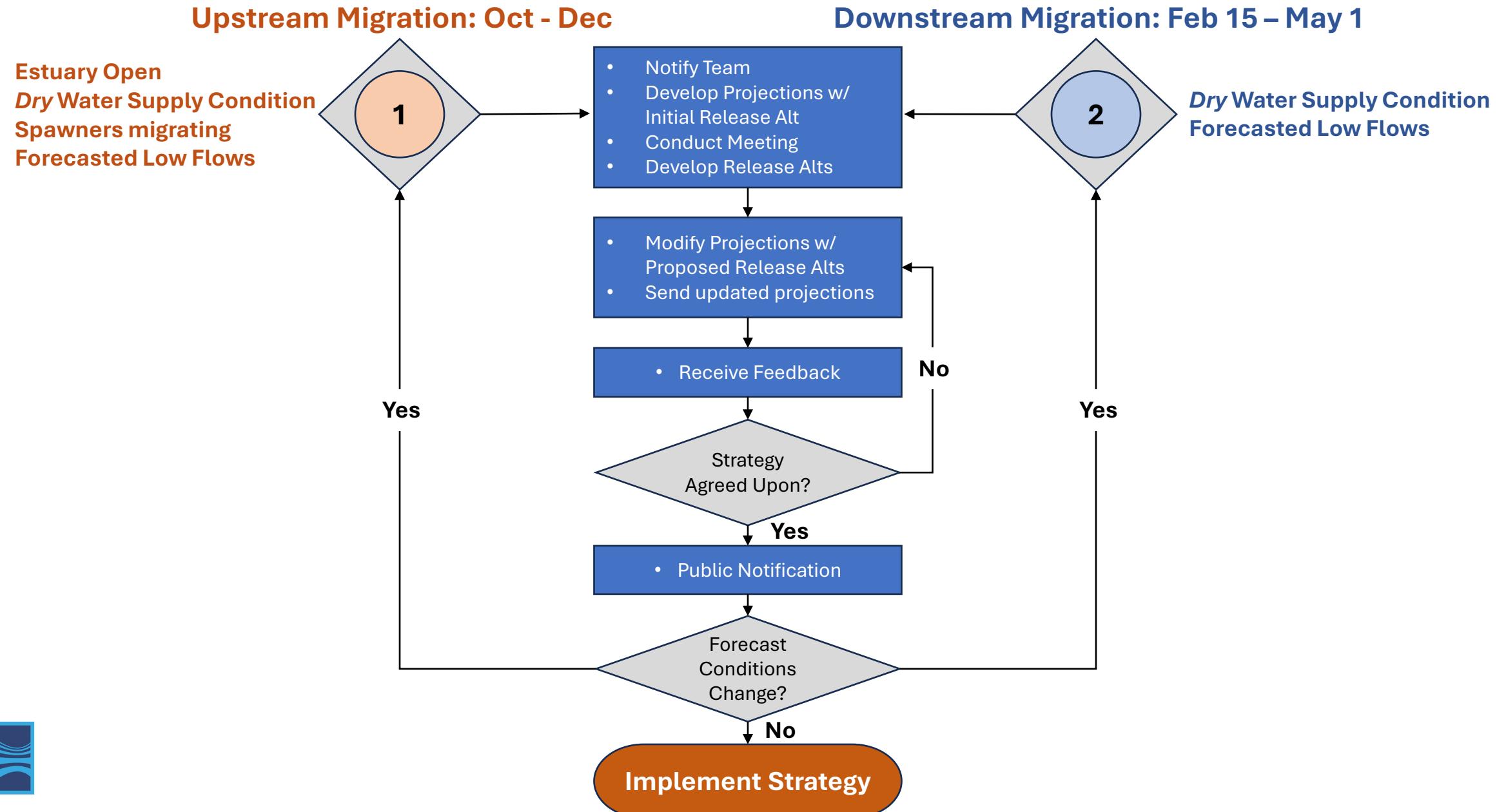
Downstream Migration: Feb 15 – June 1 management period

3

Non-management period check-in meetings



Lake Mendocino Pulse Releases

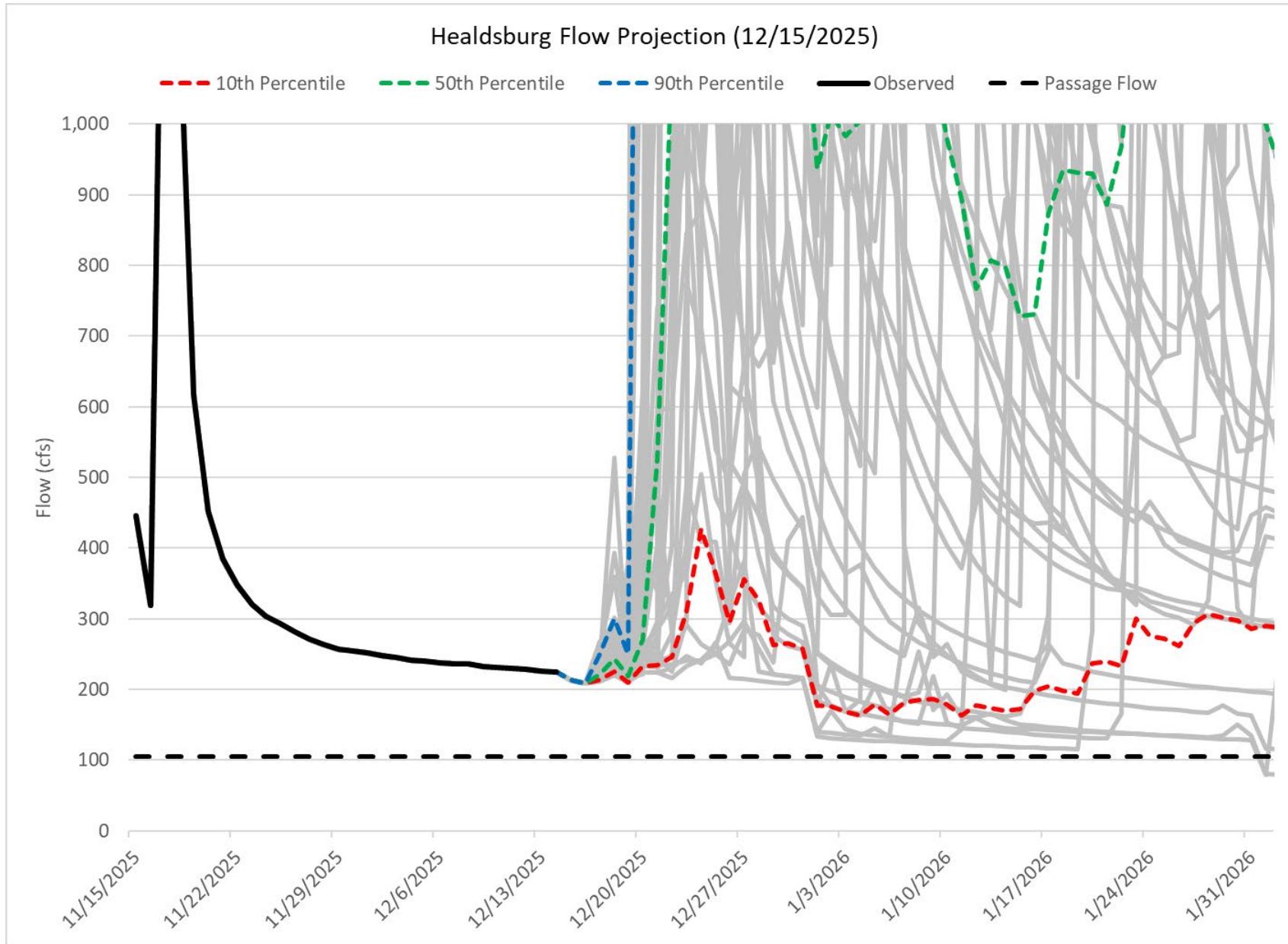


Forecasting

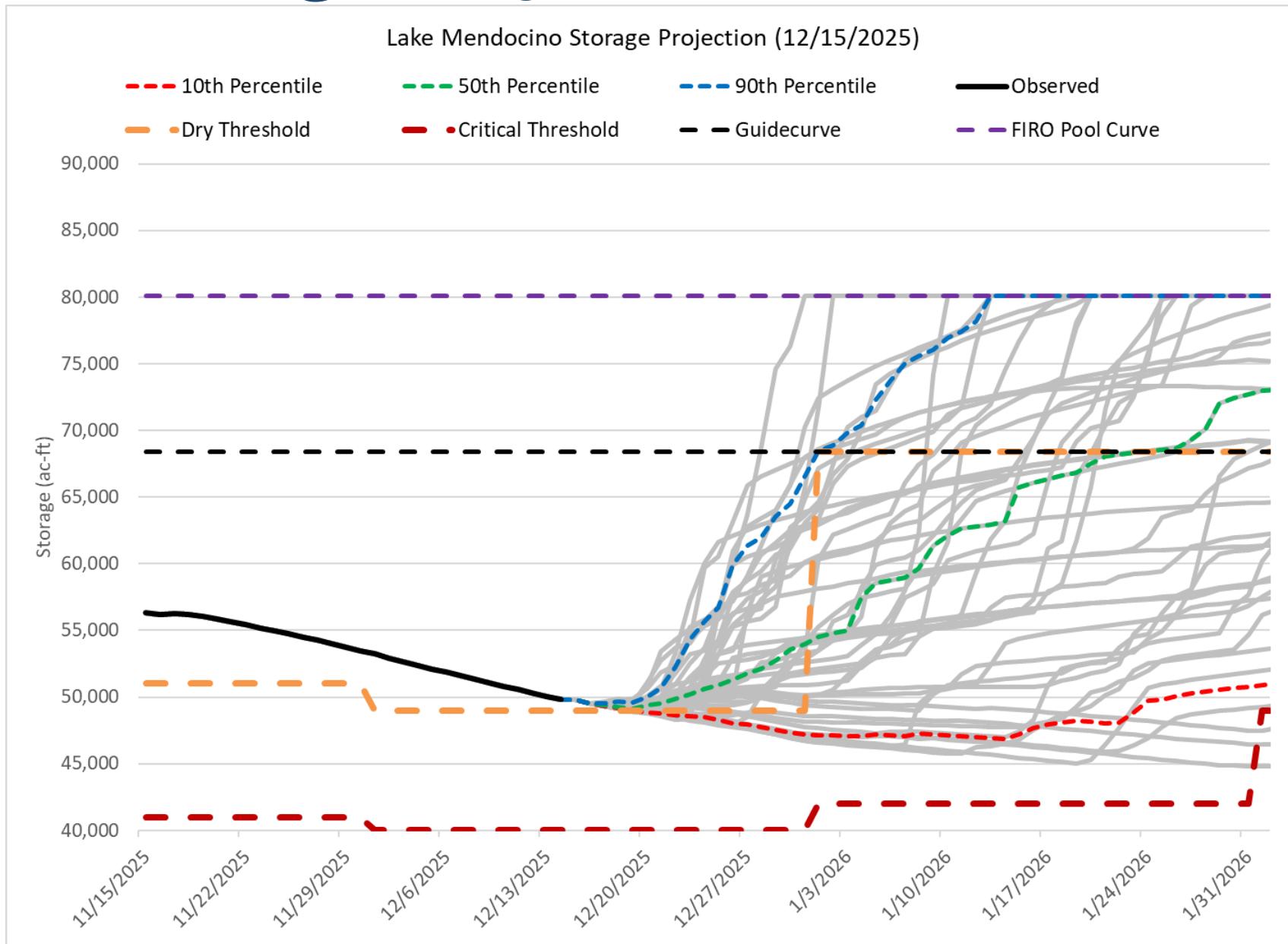
- **Forecast Informed Reservoir Operations (FIRO) Modeling Framework**
 - Ensemble forecasts from the California Nevada River Forecast Center
 - Forecasts developed and distributed once per week to workgroup
 - 30-day lead time
- **Locations:**
 - Lake Mendocino and Lake Sonoma
 - Russian River flows
- **Results will be posted every week to a Sonoma Water website**
 - If conditions warrant forecasts can be provided more frequently
 - Forecasts will be provided by email until website is developed



Example Flow Forecast



Example Storage Projection



Next Steps

- Continued collaboration with Workgroup to refine program
- Continued issuance of weekly forecasts for decision support
- Develop Adaptive Management Plan

